29 DEF 12-5 TSR (683) R

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

xR DEF 12-5 LEB

43 CONFIDENTIAL

Action RR RUEHCR
BE RUPMBE 523B 07/1645Z
NEA R 071544Z ZEA
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
Info TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC 1225
INFO RUQMKG/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 266
SS RUQMAT/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 038
G RUPVWG/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 265
SP RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 420
SAH RUQMDM /AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS 232
L RUQVRA/AMEMBASSY JIDDA 218
H RUQVWCR/AMEMBASSY KUWAIT 98
AF RUFHDN/AMEMBASSY LONDON 96
EUR RUFHPA/AMEMBASSY PARIS 84
IO RUDKBT/AMEMBASSY RABAT 56
P RUQMVL/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 219
USIA RUDKPO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 67
NSC RUQMYS/AMEMBAUSY TUNIS 56
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY Duncan Peters DATE 3/18/96

RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☒ RELEASABLE ☒
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

DEF 12-5 TSR

DEPCIRTEL 2154, MAY 6.

REPORT OF FRENCH SALE OF GROUND-TO-GROUND MISSILES TO ISRAEL FIRST APPEARED MAY SIX IN NEW BEIRUT DAILY LE JOUR AND IN ITS TWO SISTER DAILIES DAILY STAR AND AL-MAYAT. REPORT WAS CONFINED TO SINGLE BEIRUT NEWSPAPER FAMILY, WHILE REMAINDER OF BEIRUT PRESS CONTAINED NO MENTION OF FRENCH-ISRAELI MISSILE DEAL AND GAVE LITTLE SUBSEQUENT ATTENTION TO STORY.

RMR

PAGE TWO RUQMBE 523B C O N F I D E N T I A L

THE THREE NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS STATE ISRAEL TO RECEIVE FRENCH MD-620 GROUND-TO-GROUND MISSILES WITH 500-KILOMETER RANGE ABOUT THE END OF THE YEAR, TO BALANCE UAR GROUND-TO-GROUND ROCKETS SOON TO BE OPERATIONAL AND THAT ISRAELI TECHNICIANS NOW IN TRAINING IN GREECE. NO SOURCE NAMED FOR SUCH INFORMATION.

2 ON MAY 7, AL HAYAT AND DAILY STAR STATED THAT PUBLICATION OF MISSILE STORY AT TIME HELOU VISITING PARIS "PURELY COINCIDENTAL" AND NOT INTENDED EITHER TO CAUSE EMBARRASSMENT OR TO STRENGTHEN LEBANON'S HAND IN ARMS NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRENCH. IN EDITORIAL, AL-HAYAT DISMISSED IDEA THAT HELOU COULD INDUCE DE GAULLE TO CEASE FRENCH MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ISRAEL AND CALLED FOR ARABS TO ARM THEMSELVES WITH SIMILAR WEAPONS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

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EMBASSY NOTES THAT REPORT BEING GIVEN PARTICULARLY PROMINENT TREATMENT IN LE JOUR (OF WHICH INITIAL ISSUE CORRESPONDED APPROPRIATELY WITH HELOU'S ARRIVAL IN PARIS), PLUS PAPERS LINKED WITH LE JOUR.

PAGE THREE RUQMBE 523B C O N F I D E N T I A L

GIVEN ALREADY CROWDED BEIRUT NEWSPAPER MARKET AND LEVEL OF LEBANESE JOURNALISM, EMBASSY DOES NOT DISCOUNT POSSIBILITY THAT NOTEWORTHY LAUNCHING OF LE JOUR MIGHT BE MAJOR GOAL OF APPEARANCE OF FRENCH MISSILE STORY AT THIS TIME, WITH ONLY SECONDARY CONSIDERATION GIVEN REPORT'S POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS. SOURCE OF STORY, IN ANY CASE, AS YET UNKNOWN.

GP-3

MIDDLETON
BT